



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

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FLOWERS ISSUES MANDATE ON TFIRS COMPLIANCE

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Fire Marshal Paula Flowers is stepping up enforcement of a state law requiring that all fires be reported to the Fire Marshal's office within 10 days of the incident.

In a July 20 letter to city and county leaders and fire chiefs from across the state, Flowers explained the importance of reporting fire incidents through the online Tennessee Fire Incident Reporting System (TFIRS). The enforcement of the reporting requirement is part of Commissioner Flowers' continuing effort to reduce Tennessee's high rate of fire death.

"The reporting requirement has been in the law for years, and yet some of the largest and best-staffed fire departments in the state have failed to provide us with this critical information," said Flowers, who is also Tennessee's Commissioner of Commerce and Insurance. "It is extremely important that departments report through this free, user-friendly online program."

Last year alone, there were 143 fire deaths in Tennessee, a 40% increase from 2002, according to Vital Records statistics collected by the Dept. of Health. Without the data from TFIRS, the Fire Marshal's office has no way to analyze the causes of those fires, determine who is most at risk, or target its fire prevention efforts.

"If Tennessee's child mortality or cancer rate had gone up 40 percent in a year, the public would be up in arms demanding action, and rightfully so," said Flowers. "This problem is just as deadly, and we need to be able to research it in order to respond to it."

TFIRS software and online training is free and additional training is provided at a minimal cost through the Fire Service and Codes Academy or through regional training sessions hosted by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Commissioner Flowers has appointed a task force which includes firefighters, codes officials, insurance professionals, and state officials to study and take a comprehensive approach to Tennessee's fire death problem.

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